

Action Program 1958

NATIONAL FARMERS UNION

Adopted by Delegates at Annual Convention
March 20, 1958
Denver, Colo.

Section I

Full Parity Income for Family Farm Operators Through Bargaining Power

We shall support Federal and State legislation and local laws and policies to improve and protect the family farm. A "family farm" is an agricultural production unit that can be efficiently operated by a typical full time farm operator family that furnishes most of its own labor. Our nation should move rapidly away from absentee ownership of farms and industrial-type farm operation. We shall continue to oppose by all means at our disposal the trend toward vertical integration controlled by off-farm interests. We shall particularly emphasize positive efforts of family farmers to obtain greater control over the financing and management of the processing and marketing of farm commodities.

However, we see no practical possibility for family farmers to acquire the bargaining power required to earn and receive a parity of income **except through authorization and protection of the Federal government.** Farmers need Government programs to obtain an equality of bargaining power in the commodity and credit markets of the Nation and the world. Farmers do not now have fair bargaining power under the existing market structure. Lack of bargaining power makes it impossible for farmers to earn and receive a fair share of national income.

1. FARM COMMODITY INCOME IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

Farmers must obtain control over the supply, marketing and pricing of their commodities. We favor establishment of a comprehensive system of commodity programs based upon managed abundance. Farmers Union is not interested in quibbling over words or details. Our interest is to cooperate with any who wish to join with us in developing programs of action to immediately raise farm income. We shall continue to support all such proposals and efforts.

Commodity Coverage. Any and all commodities should be covered by such programs when producers are willing to adopt and enforce effective measures to keep market supplies in balance with demand. Each commodity program should be adapted to the unique needs and problems of the producers of each commodity. When several commodities are closely related, such as feed, forage and livestock, they should be handled within an integrated commodity-group program.

Level of Protection. The price of the commodity or the return to the producer should be protected at not less than the parity income equivalent level, graduated so that industrial-type farm production enterprises receive income protection on only that part of their sales that does not exceed the maximum output of one family farm.

Methods. All of the several commodity and related programs, if the entire program is not enacted as permanent legislation, should be scheduled to expire at the same time.

We shall support adoption and use of workable combinations of farm commodity income improvement methods such as: loans, purchase agreements, market surplus diversion purchases, parity income deficiency payments direct to farmers, regulation of imports, export incentive payments, stabilization operations by farmers and by Government, marketing agreements and orders, other farmers' bargaining devices, marketing premium payments for sale of livestock at desirable weights, other types of marketing premium payments designed to keep supplies in balance with demand, marketing standards and scheduling, and a system of marketing quotas for all commodities as a whole, for groups of related commodities, and for individual commodities, as needed.

Market diversion and stabilization programs and similar activities by farmers and

by Government should be used to insure orderly marketing, eliminate unreasonable seasonal fluctuations in market prices, and to prevent disruption of the programs by speculation and profiteering.

Authority to make use of marketing orders and quotas should be authorized for producers of all commodities.

Marketing Quotas. All marketing quotas should be expressed in terms of commodity units such as bushels and pounds rather than as acreage allotments, or limitations upon numbers of livestock or poultry. Each farmer could produce any volume in any year and store and seal the excess under bond and sell under his marketing quota for a subsequent year. Marketing quotas or orders or stabilization programs should not go into operation until adopted by a majority of the producers voting in a referendum.

When marketing quotas are in operation each farm family should be issued a farm marketing quota certificate that would indicate the volume of sales for the different commodities which the operator could market without payment of over-quota penalty or losing his income-protection eligibility. The penalty for over-quota sales should be not less than 75 percent of the parity income equivalent price. Sales could be made only on basis of Within-quota or Over-quota Sales Certificate to be obtained by the producer from the county farmer committee. **No commodity would be allowed to move in the channels of trade unless it were accompanied by a proper Sales Certificate.**

The national marketing quota would be that volume of a commodity or group of commodities that will clear the market at the income protection level, under assumption of a full employment economy, and would be the total of domestic use plus exports plus needed additions to the national safety reserve. The national marketing quota for export commodities should be divided into a domestic marketing quota and an export marketing quota.

National marketing quotas should be annually reallocated—**by farmer-elected Federal, State and county boards and committees of farmers**—to States, counties, and individual farm-production enterprises, including new producers, so that each will receive its fair proration of the national quota. The farmer boards and committees would take into account such features as: historical marketings, trends, abnormal production conditions in historical period, production resources available, rotation and fallow practices, soil and other physical factors, relative dependence of different areas and farms upon one or a few crops, good land use, soil and water conservation practices, equitable adjustments to avoid hardship, and such other similar factors as may be necessary to preserve equity and operate the programs effectively and efficiently. Proration of marketing quotas would be subject to a graduated quota assignment system.

Conservation Reserve. We urge repeal of the Acreage Reserve of the Soil Bank and expansion and improvement of the Conservation Reserve.

Competing Imports. Safeguards should be established to prevent the destruction or weakening of commodity bargaining power programs by imports of competing farm commodities or products or substitutes thereof. This should be done by means of automatic fluctuating parity tariff, import quotas or similar devices, or, preferably, **by parity income deficiency payments**, or a combination thereof as in the Sugar and Wool programs.

Parity Income Deficiency Payments. Parity income deficiency payments direct to farmers should also be used when the domestic marketing quota, established on assumption of full payment, sells in the market for less than the parity income equivalent price and should be the difference by which the

market price is lower than the income protection level. Direct payments to farmers should, also, be used at all other times when the Federal government determines that the domestic market price should be held below the income protection level.

2. LOAN AND CREDIT PROGRAM FOR FARMER-OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

We continue to support efforts to further strengthen and improve the services and resources of the Banks for Cooperatives. In addition, we urge enactment of an REA-type loan and technical assistance program as a supplement to and tied in with the income programs outlined in 1, above. Such a program would assist farmers to organize, operate, acquire, and build nationwide and regional farmer-owned and controlled business enterprises. Services performed would include: purchase of needed farm and home supplies, assembly, storage, processing, marketing, and distributing of farm commodities and their products. We also urge the making of loans to enable farmers to build storage facilities and to acquire membership in farmer-owned business enterprises. We support establishment of a nationwide farm commodity exporting cooperative, owned by farmers.

3. ADAPTED FAMILY FARM CREDIT

We shall continue our efforts to strengthen the services and resources of the cooperative institutions of the Farm Credit Administration. We will continue to help expand and strengthen credit unions in rural areas. In addition, we urge enactment of legislation to expand the funds and authorities of Farmers Home Administration. This agency should be transformed into a complete **yardstick family farm loan institution.** Family farm operators should be able to turn to this agency to obtain fully adequate credit adapted to family farm needs and problems when such credit cannot be obtained from established private sources at rates of interest and on terms commensurate with the earning power of farm investment.

4. EXPAND CONSUMPTION

All areas of expanding demand for farm commodities, consistent with good soil conservation practice, should be explored exhaustively before we concern ourselves with production restrictions; **our first concern is that no person lacks the food needed for adequate nutrition.** Therefore, we urge enactment and establishment of a national food allotment stamp plan; a Federal school lunch and fluid milk program in every non-profit school, summer camp and day nursery; adequate nutritional standards in public institutions; Federal credit to encourage the establishment of efficient terminal markets for perishable farm produce; expanded nutritional research and education programs; and all other workable methods needed to close the gap between what persons can afford to pay for food and fiber products and what they need to maintain an adequate standard of nutrition and well-being.

Additional emphasis should be given to Federal programs to promote greater industrial use of farm commodities not needed for food at prices consistent with full parity income for farmers. We urge adoption of an immediate and adequate program for continuing research aimed at expanded practical industrial and other new uses of agricultural products. We further recommend reactivation and pilot experimental of presently-owned government facilities, including grain alcohol and synthetic rubber plants. Satisfying the true need of this nation's citizens for farm commodities is a truly national program, not one to be accomplished at the expense of farm family income.

5. EXPAND FARM EXPORTS

International and Federal agencies and programs required to make full use of abundant farm production to promote widespread, rapid economic development, improved living standards, and permanent peace throughout the world should be strengthened and established where necessary. Such agencies and programs should include renewal and improvement of the International Wheat and Sugar Agreements; the establishment of additional international commodity agreements of this type; and an International Food and Raw Materials Reserve Bank.

A long-range program and expanded appropriation should be enacted along the lines of the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act, for sales in foreign currency, for donations of food and fiber to

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needy peoples of the world, and for barter. In such long-range expansion, emphasis should be on foreign policy values as well as farm policy values.

Under Public Law 480, the purposes of soft currency loans and commodity donations should be broadened to include encouragement for establishing universal free general and vocational education systems in nations which do not now have them and for construction and operation of basic capital improvements such as roads, bridges, canals, irrigation systems, water and soil conservation facilities, reforestation, dams, hydro, thermal and nuclear electric systems and others.

6. NATIONAL SAFETY RESERVE

An adequately decentralized national safety reserve of food and fiber of a sufficient volume and quantity completely adequate to national security, safety and welfare should be established so as to be completely isolated from the market. The commodities should be owned by the appropriate agency under the Strategic and Critical Materials Stockpiling Act.

7. FEDERAL CROP AND LIVESTOCK INSURANCE

The Federal crop insurance program should be improved and expanded until it is available to farmers in every county in the United States and to all crops. Need for livestock death insurance against hazards not covered by existing insurance companies at reasonable costs should be explored and experimental programs initiated where needed. Administrative and experimental costs should be paid from appropriations, and losses should be paid from premiums by policyholders, with Congress to appropriate sufficient funds to cover unusual losses in disaster areas. Both multiple and single crop policies should be available in all counties. The extent to which any farm operator may participate in Federal crop and livestock insurance programs should be limited to maximum family farm production.

8. TIMBER PRICE REPORTS

An adequate reporting system should be established by the U. S. Department of Agriculture for farm timber products, covering price, supply and demand.

9. ADMINISTRATION BY FARMER COMMITTEES

Legislation should be enacted to require that all Federal farm action programs dealing with individual farm families be administered by democratically-elected community, county and state committees of farmers. The reduction of such committees to a merely advisory capacity should be prohibited by law. At the national level, in the U. S. Department of Agriculture, these programs should be administered by a Federal Farm Income Improvement Board or Boards composed entirely of farm operators, at least a majority of whom were democratically-elected by farmers.

10. INVESTIGATION OF MARKET SPREADS

Sufficient funds should be appropriated by Congress to inaugurate and provide for a continuous Congressional investigation into the widening spread between prices received by farmers and those paid by consumers and the results of such investigations publicized through reports prepared and released as public information by the Congress. If necessary to control these spreads, regulatory measures of the Interstate Commerce Commission-type should be instituted. Additional means of exercising Federal regulation or yardstick operation should be explored.

11. RESEARCH, PROTECTIVE AND MARKET SERVICES

Congress should enact increased appropriations to expand and improve the marketing services, agricultural information, protective operations, regulations of commodity exchanges, and research services of the United States Department of Agriculture. Particular emphasis should be placed upon improving the volume and quality of service to family farms, expansion and extension of the cattle "TB" and brucellosis indemnity program, and provisions for adequate Federal inspection and grading of perishable farm produce at terminal markets. Emphasis should be shifted from production research to research designed specifically to solve the problems of falling farm income such as how to strengthen farmers' bargaining power, expand farmers' cooperatives, reduce farm to retail marketing margins, increase efficiency

of farm commodity processing, increase effectiveness of merchandising and packaging for farm products, expand markets, expand industrial uses, appropriate farm production and supply adjustments and similar types of scientific studies. We also urge expansion and strengthening of the Food and Drug Administration to more adequately protect the public against radiation and injurious chemicals. Legislation should be enacted to require grade and content labeling of food and other processed farm products and of chemicals at the retail level.

12. SPECIAL LOW INCOME FAMILY FARM PROGRAM

Congress should enact family farm development legislation required to provide needed federal services and activities to provide opportunity and to enable particularly low income farm families in chronically depressed rural areas to establish themselves upon a wholly adequate economic basis.

13. CONSOLIDATED HOUSING OF FARM AGENCIES

Federal farm agencies in each county should be housed in the same building. The public works shelf recommended in section IV should include projects to erect such buildings.

14. CONSERVATION AND LAND USE PLANNING

Expansion and continued improvement of programs is needed in the fields of agricultural soil, water, and related farm resources conservation; soil surveys; soil conservation research; tree seedling nurseries; reforestation; and cover crop seed supply expansion activities of Federal and State governments. Particular attention should be given to the growing water shortage problem for farm, industrial and urban users.

More rapid expansion of scientific land use plans and soil classification should be made. These plans and classifications serve as useful guides to private individual action. When related to governmental farm programs, such regulations should be drawn with full regard for the traditional protection provided by the Constitution for unmoled continuation of nonconforming uses.

When land is needed for development or expansion of military establishments, unoccupied areas unfit for farm and ranch production should be acquired rather than good farm or grazing land, unless absolutely contrary to strategic necessity.

SPECIAL RESOLUTION

Whereas: the Secretary of Agriculture has ordered the elimination of important soil and water conserving practices in the ACP program without consulting Congress or farmer-elected committeemen, be it therefore resolved that this convention of National Farmers Union goes on record urging the secretary to reinstate the discontinued practices.

Section II

An Expanding Full Employment Economy

We know from our national experience that maximum prosperity, without inflation, can only be attained and maintained so long as the national economy as a whole continues to expand its consumption and investment with increased leisure at a rate equal to our population increase, plus rising productivity per man hour. National policies and programs to insure this rate of national economic growth, should be established.

1. IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT ACT

The Employment Act of 1946 should be amended to require establishment of specific annual and long range goals for farm family income and to provide that corporations and labor unions in key basic industries, such as steel and chemicals, be required to submit their plans for production volume, prices and wage levels to the President's Council of Economic Advisors for review, analysis and publication of the implications to the entire national economy of such plans before they are put into effect.

We urge the insistence by Congress that the full intent and purpose of the Employment Act of 1946 be carried out by the Executive Branch of the Government.

2. MONETARY AND CREDIT POLICIES

National monetary and credit policies should be designed to make adequate funds available at minimum rates of interest so that desirable productive investment will be encouraged. Selective controls should be used to curb inflation if it occurs, and monetary and credit policies should also be used

to maintain a positive expanding full employment economy.

3. BUDGET POLICIES

Federal budgetary policies should be geared to the needs of an expanding full employment economy with capital items separated from other expenditures and the cash budget separated from the authorizations budget.

4. PUBLIC WORKS SHELVE

An approved shelf of public work plans should be ready for instant use to stop the development of a depression.

5. ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

Sufficient Federal and State funds should be appropriated to build and maintain all-weather roads wherever needed and to provide a fully adequate national highway system without toll roads, and with Federal financing to states with state-fund-matching requirements based upon each state's relative fiscal ability.

Authority of the Interstate Commerce Commission to regulate freight rates in interstate commerce should be strengthened. We favor elimination of state boundary barriers to interstate transportation.

6. AIRPORTS AND MERCHANT MARINE

Expansion and modernization of our airports and merchant marine should continue, as should the provisions of the Cargo Preference Act.

7. DECENTRALIZATION OF INDUSTRY

Adequate Federal services and credit to promote the needed decentralization of industry should be provided. Congress should enact the area redevelopment program to expand economic opportunities in chronically depressed rural and urban areas.

8. SUPPORT OF SMALL BUSINESS

Because of the mutual inter-related economic best interests and inter-dependence of small business and farmers, we recommend proper protection for small business against the encroachment and exploitation of big business monopoly that is currently being encouraged by economic policies of the Federal Executive Branch. We urge enactment of legislation to strengthen the economic position of small business to give it an equality of opportunity in our national economy.

9. LABOR RELATIONS

We support the efforts of all those who work for employers to obtain Federal and State legislation to protect their rights to organize, bargain collectively, and protect their organizations. We oppose so-called "right-to-work" legislation and support expansion of minimum wage legislation to cover all employees, along with federal protection to employers to enable them to pay just wages. The national policy to eliminate illegal immigration should be more vigorously enforced and our nation should expand and modernize legal immigration quotas. We urge enactment of legislation to eliminate the abuses and exploitation of human beings in the farm labor importation program by industrialized agricultural enterprises and the elimination as rapidly as possible of the economic conditions used to justify continuation of the program. We oppose legislation to restrict labor or farm organizations from full participation in political action in public elections.

10. FEDERAL TAXATION

We support improvement of Federal tax legislation in order to readjust tax burdens to an ability-to-pay basis, with heavier taxation on large incomes and lower tax burdens for small business and low and middle income families. Such adjustments should substantially increase personal income tax exemptions, eliminate excise and sales taxes except on luxuries, and prevent enactment of a national retail and manufacturers' sale tax.

We also must re-enact the excess profits tax, and close all of the many existing loopholes in corporate income and capital gains taxes, as well as reduce corporation taxes on small business. We call for the elimination of the depletion exemption used as tax loopholes and of special exemption concessions on corporate stock dividends.

11. CONTROL MONOPOLY

Legislation to stop monopolistic mergers and to break up existing powerful combinations of economic strength should be enacted. We recommend vigorous prosecution of anti-trust violators, with mandatory jail sentences and larger fines for those convicted.

Vertically integration devices should be thoroughly investigated to the end that adequate legislation may be enacted. We advocate all possible measures which will check this trend insofar as it operates to the detriment of family farmers. To block

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vertical integration controlled by off-farm interests and to prevent unnecessary administered-price inflation, food processing and distribution and other key industries in the economy should be brought under Federal regulation of prices and margins similar to that exercised by the Interstate Commerce Commission over public carriers. The methods of developing Federal Yardstick industrial operations in key spheres should be explored as should the merits of Federal incorporation of corporations in key industries.

12. UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

We urge enactment of improved unemployment compensation laws.

13. POSTAL RATES

We oppose any increase of regular first class mail and parcel post rates and urge elimination of the federal subsidy for unsolicited advertisements and propaganda.

14. CIVIL DEFENSE AND DISASTER INSURANCE

We recommend adequate Federal financing for non-military civilian defense to provide food for distressed areas in the event of attack or natural disaster such as flood or tornado. Adequate stores of food and fiber should be stored in rural areas surrounding our cities and towns, available for civilian use if the need arises. These stores should be fully insulated from the market. Special measures should be adopted to provide adequate natural disaster insurance and relief measures to rehabilitate distressed areas.

15. RESEARCH

Federal appropriations and facilities for basic and applied physical, biological and social science research should be expanded as rapidly as the increase in number of qualified personnel will permit efficient use.

16. FEDERAL-STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

The operations of the Federal-State Employment Service should be expanded and improved in rural areas, both to make more complete and accurate data available to rural people concerning employment opportunities and to aid in channeling the supply of those seeking work into areas of need and labor shortage rather than into areas of labor surplus, underemployment and unemployment.

Section III

Developing America's Human Resources

National Farmers Union favors Federal laws and policies which will help promote the fullest attainment of the aspirations and human needs of all of our citizens. We particularly urge the earliest possible enactment and establishment of the following measures, among others that are needed:

1. MANAGED AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL ABUNDANCE

We promote national and international policies, both in agriculture and in industry, encouraging efficient and abundant production, equitable distribution, and protecting and purchasing power of all groups so that prosperity may be widespread and poverty, malnutrition, want and starvation eliminated from the face of the earth.

2. CIVIL RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES

It shall be our purpose to seek to preserve and broaden the civil liberties and rights of all the people.

The details of the Declaration of Independence and the safeguards guaranteed to the people by the Constitution and its Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments must be made a living code of conduct for our nation.

We shall continue to seek as individuals and as an organization to remove every remaining vestige of discrimination in any form whenever and wherever it may arise.

We shall oppose every proposal and all forces and personalities which seek to abridge, abrogate, or eliminate any of our civil rights and liberties, or by intimidation to drive the people or their voluntary organizations from the full exercise of civil rights and liberties.

We shall continue to combat fear-mongering with facts.

3. ADEQUATE EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children should have the opportunity to obtain at least the equivalent of 14 years of education in their own community. Federal and State laws should be enacted to

provide for early establishment of completely adequate public rural and urban educational-cultural centers to meet the full needs of all people, adults as well as children. In addition to educational facilities, these centers should include parks, playgrounds, day nurseries, meeting halls, recreation equipment, and libraries with traveling auxiliaries. As we move toward this goal, provision must be made for sufficient financial aid to school administrators, teachers, and students to provide an equal opportunity for top quality education from the lowest to the highest educational levels our society affords. Attention should be given to special incentives which should be provided for high-aptitude students with the will to learn in the fields of science, humanities and mathematics and for the training of additional teachers.

A program along the lines of the highly successful GI Bill should be renewed and its principles should be extended in workable ways to all young people, according to need and to aptitude for college level education.

Vocational high school and adult education under the George-Barden Act should be expanded through substantially increasing appropriations beyond the limits of existing law with additional authority to use funds for improving high school science and mathematics courses.

Low income farm families should be given special attention through vocational agricultural and extension programs with increased appropriations being used for education in both production and merchandising to increase their earning power and thereby increasing their contribution to the economy.

Increased federal appropriations for grants-in-aid to state land grant colleges are equally needed and strongly urged. Additional college teachers and buildings are urgently needed to meet current rising college enrollments and to provide experimental laboratories and research facilities for graduate training.

We commend the action of state land grant colleges and state legislatures for acting to make vocational adult education services available to all farm families, irrespective of economic status or organizational affiliation. All remaining ties, formal or informal, between agricultural extension services and private farm organizations must be severed.

We recommend further that all Federal aids to states for elementary, secondary, college and graduate level education be completely safeguarded to preserve local control. Such grants should be based on relative fiscal capacity of the states. We are particularly concerned that educational facilities and faculties of colleges and universities in the rural farm states are having increasing difficulty in maintaining sufficient financial resources to maintain quality and scope commensurate to the need.

4. CHURCHES

Religious influence has a major role in the improvement of family farm living. The unique spiritual values of living on the land must be preserved. We urge the development of an understanding and application of the great religious principles in our daily living. The increasing concern that church groups have shown for the family farm is most encouraging. We desire to cooperate with church groups in a continuing application of religious and ethical principles to the great agricultural policy issues of the day.

5. COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH PROGRAM

A comprehensive national program that will enable all our citizens to participate in prepaid medical care and hospitalization should be adopted. Federal and State aid should be used to stimulate the training of sufficient doctors, dentists and nurses to meet the needs of the people. These funds should be awarded on the basis of relative fiscal capacity of individual states. Expansion of mental and other hospital building programs and provision of public funds for construction of additional community clinics are also recommended, as are appropriations for federal and state public health services. All barriers to extension of competent medical, dental, and hospital education and services should be eliminated.

6. HOUSING

The U. S. housing act should be extended with expanded provisions for public housing for low income families, including adequate grants and direct and insured loans for rural housing.

7. SOCIAL SECURITY

We urge expansion of all phases of the national Social Security program to all citi-

zens. We must block efforts to repeal extension of Old Age and Survivors Insurance for farmers and farm laborers. We should provide a means whereby Social Security benefits will remain consistent with increasing costs and improving standards of living.

Section IV

Using America's Natural Resources for All

Publicly and privately owned land and resources should be administered in the interest of all the public. To make certain they are, we urge adoption of the following national legislation and policies:

1. COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We urge further Federal development of natural geographic areas such as entire river valley basins to promote better use of all natural resources for all purposes. We favor enactment of legislation to establish a coordinated Great Plains Administration. Separate regional developments of this type should be coordinated, both with respect to river valley considerations and to National economic policies.

Small watershed flood prevention and agricultural soil, water and related resources conservation programs must be continued and expanded, both before and after establishment of such valley developments. Such development programs should include but not be limited to intensification and expansion of existing conservation programs on both private and public land; reforestation and revegetation to protect watersheds and increase timber and forage; increased appropriations for conservational management of all resources; and construction and maintenance of timber and stock access roads in national forests. We must make use of all scientific and technological advances to increase conservation of all natural resources. The destruction and depletion of our land and our forests must be halted.

We strongly recommend enactment of laws making it mandatory for the Executive branch to submit to Congress for prior approval any proposals to sell or grant proprietary privileges in Federally-owned land or resources to private interests. We oppose revocation of Federal commitments entered into by treaty between the United States government and various Indian tribes. We shall support efforts to safeguard Indian lands and resources from exploitation and expropriation in violation of treaty obligations. Congressional approval would be granted only where it was clearly shown that the general national welfare would be promoted by alienation of title.

2. DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATION OF ENERGY AND POWER

We urge enactment of clear-cut Federal legislation and policies to establish clearly Federal responsibility to produce, regulate, and control public power through programs of area development on the basis of all-inclusive support of a total national program.

We urge enactment of legislation to require the Federal Power Commission to license only those projects which are best adapted to improving or developing the water resources of a river basin to obtain by integrated operation the maximum amount of net public benefits consistent with good business principles.

Regional development agencies should be established to assure proper use of Federal hydro-electric power and provide for optimum conservation and development of all multi-purpose uses and benefits, including water for cities, industry, flood control, irrigation, recreation and navigation.

We endorse the sound policy which provides that water is to be used for navigation only to the extent that such use does not conflict with such other purposes as domestic and municipal consumption, pollution control, irrigation including ground-water recharge, industrial consumption, hydro-electric power, generation, and wildlife and recreation needs.

We urge Federal generation and transmission of the power required for present and future needs of non-profit electric systems and the use of the withdrawal clause to protect the rights of preference customers. The Federal government should supply technical and financial support to cooperatives and other non-profit power agencies in setting up needed generating and transmission facilities. The high voltage transmission facilities necessary to integrate individual hydro-electric projects and to deliver appreciable portions of their output to the load

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centers of preference customers should be Federally constructed and operated.

The Federal government should purchase or generate sufficient thermal energy that together with maximum development of the hydro-electric capacity of the Federal system will provide maximum amounts of firm power to preference customers at load centers to meet sustained firm power needs with full capacity for peak loads.

Any electric or other utility, engaged in interstate commerce and enjoying guaranteed profits without risk while operating as a private monopoly with government protection, should be prevented from counting as costs in rate-making the money spent, either directly or indirectly, to influence political action at any level. We also urge amendment of the Internal Revenue Act to preclude charging off such expenditures as tax deductions. We recommend legislation requiring that accelerated tax amortization benefits be passed on to consumers.

Violation of the Federal preference clause by the Department of Interior by a policy of deceit and subterfuge which includes refusal to sell Federal power to cooperatives and municipalities must be forestalled. All limitations on areas served by non-profit electric utilities should be removed.

We urge the enactment of legislation prohibiting Federal agencies from turning over any economically feasible Federal power sites such as **Hells Canyon** to private companies which would interfere with or prevent comprehensive development.

The excess lands provisions governing the use of water in Federal irrigation projects in the Federal reclamation law should be preserved.

We insist that Congress either authorize expenditure of funds for the Tennessee Valley Authority, to take care of the growing and critical power shortage in that area, or authorize the sale of bonds by the Tennessee Valley Authority, to provide funds for expansion. We oppose the administration's recommendation requiring TVA to repay funds greatly in excess of amortization requirements as determined by Congress.

The Department of the Interior should be prohibited by law from arbitrarily substituting one system of cost allocation for another. Also, the period of amortization should be increased from 50 to 100 years.

3. RURAL TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIFICATION PROGRAM

A more rapid expansion of the rural electrification and telephone programs with provisions for adequate funds and Federal policies to expand rural telephone and electrification facilities are needed in order that all farm families may have a fully adequate telephone service and supply of available electric power.

In order to expedite the program and make necessary expenditures, the deferral of repayment periods should be extended from three to five years. **We oppose legislation designed to increase interest rates on loans made to rural electric cooperatives.** State and Local Farmers Unions must take active part in election or selection of state public service regulatory commissions to insure that the needs of the people are represented so that the area coverage and feasibility requirements may be obtained. We urge legislation which would restore the authority of the REA Administrator. We support the present existing low interest rate and long term amortization of REA loans. We urge a continued Congressional policy of authorization of adequate REA loan funds. We urge a more aggressive policy on the part of REA to assist farmers to establish telephone cooperatives. We urge that state policies and legislation be directed to safeguard the rights of REA cooperatives in areas they are now servicing.

4. ATOMIC POWER—THE NEW PUBLIC POWER

We urge enactment of needed legislation to insure that new sources of atomic energy which have been developed with taxpayers' money will be used to benefit all at the lowest possible cost by authorizing and directing the Atomic Energy Commission to push promptly ahead the development and regulation of atomic power in ways that give primary benefits to the general public.

Specifically, we urge authorization for the actual use of atomic reactors to boost

the electrical energy output of REA cooperatives and other preference customers of public power. And we further recommend that safeguards be set up now that will guarantee maintenance of preference clauses in energy produced by Federal atomic programs, and further safeguards that make it definite that atomic power will not become a private monopoly beyond the reach of Federal control or regulation.

Section V

A Responsible Foreign Policy

The United States must live up to its responsibility as the world's most fortunate independent democracy by shaping a foreign policy that will dignify and promote the attainment of human rights and aspirations, and that will show the world that a free and democratic society can expand. We must cooperate with other nations who aspire to do the same.

1. OUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR WAGING PEACE

We must not base our foreign policy on nuclear might and "massive retaliation." Rather, the United States should demonstrate its willingness to lead the way to permanent peace with a positive program aimed at abolishing the reasons for war, including—but not limited to—efforts to ease and ultimately eliminate starvation, human exploitation, feudalism, dictatorship, colonialism, bad tenure systems, discrimination and all other injustices and threats to permanent peace consistent with non-dictatorial and non-oppressive governments.

Working toward these objectives, we should strengthen the United Nations. We favor the establishment of a permanent United Nations emergency police force, an improved Court of Justice—within the framework of the United Nations—to prevent aggression and to bring aggressors to trial.

2. NATIONAL SECURITY

We shall support development of essential national defense. The military personnel policy should be continuously re-evaluated in terms of developing modern technology and the changing international situation. Defense technological advances and training required for military personnel appear to require emphasis on longer enlistments of trained professional personnel with sufficient incentives for such with more emphasis on quality than quantity. We support a truly selective service as a means of obtaining adequate numbers for the armed forces when voluntary enlistments are insufficient to provide the number of persons required for the uniformed armed forces.

Existing universal military training and service legislation should be repealed.

3. UNIVERSAL DISARMAMENT

While assisting and encouraging development of free world defensive strength through the Mutual Security Program, the United States should use its moral, defensive and economic leadership in trying to work out foolproof means to universal disarmament through the United Nations. This must include definite assurance of being able to become forewarned of breaches of disarmament agreements.

Believing that moving surplus food to hungry people, and increasing the world food supply to provide sufficient food for all mankind would bring about a great expansion of the world market for industrial products and consumer goods and so contribute to economic prosperity with full employment, and believing that the cooperation of all nations in such a worldwide project would be an important step toward world unity and peace, and believing that the funds for this humanitarian project could be obtained by getting all nations to reduce their military budgets by, say 10%, which would make an important contribution to the difficult problem of disarmament, half of this saving to be retained by each nation to reduce the intolerable burden of taxation, and the other half to be devoted to an international fund under the United Nations to finance this great international plan.

Therefore, this convention of the National Farmers Union of America, meeting at Denver, Colorado this 20th day of March,

4. ATOMIC POWER FOR ALL TO SHARE

We urge exchange of non-military atomic power materials, equipment and information among nations for the purpose of improving standards of living, developing human and natural resources and encouraging more rapid scientific and technological progress.

5. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

We urge expansion and improvement of United Nations specialized agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization. We further recommend the establishment of an economic union of democratic nations consistent with the United States Constitution and its Bill of Rights to speed up economic development, improve productivity of labor, land and water resources, and to eliminate international legal and institutional obstacles to organization of such international cooperation as the European Common Market.

6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES

We urge enactment of long term legislation directing the use of the tremendous strength of United States food, technology and capital toward aiding the wholesale economic development of less fortunate nations of the world. This must be done through full United States participation in programs of aid implemented to the fullest possible extent through the United Nations, and its specialized agencies, and through private non-profit foreign relief groups.

Any such programs of assistance developed by our own nation must be kept entirely separate from the necessary military devices of foreign policy. Such programs of aid must not be used in such a way as to interfere with the self determination ambitions of any nation, nor to perpetuate totalitarianism or colonialism. The ultimate aim of any such program must be to promote the material well-being, employment, production, trade and investment in ways that will enrich human life, eliminate economic weaknesses and promote an increased rate of economic development and growth.

7. FOREIGN TRADE POLICY FOR EXPANSION

We urge United States leadership in negotiation of an International Food and Raw Materials Reserve within the framework of the United Nations buttressed and coupled with additional international commodity agreements for cotton, tobacco, dairy products, and other commodities that enter importantly into world trade.

To operate consistently with international commodity agreements and the International Food and Raw Materials Reserve, we support a continued and expanded use of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act with amendments providing for specific adjustments to implement farmer bargaining power programs, enactment of further customs simplification, ratification of U. S. membership in the Organization for Trade Cooperation, and in the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs.

We urge enactment of farm programs and other trade adjustment aid programs to protect our consumers, producers, farmers or any other group from the dangers and disadvantages of sole reliance upon the so-called international free market. The costs involved in the conduct of our foreign economic policy should be shared by all people.

World Peace and Prosperity

1958, calls on the Government of the United States to take the lead in getting the nations of the world to cooperate in carrying through this World Food Plan which would be of great benefit to the highly industrialized as well as the underdeveloped countries.

It is resolved that copies of this resolution be sent to:

The Honorable Dwight D. Eisenhower, President of the United States;
All appropriate committees of the Congress of the United States;
The American Delegates to the United Nations.

It is further resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Director General of the Food and Agricultural Organization which was established for this purpose.

And to all member nations of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers suggesting that each should send a resolution on the same basis to the governments of their respective nations urging them to take such action as is necessary to implement their participation in this plan.